



# Voting Information News

March 2005 or Vol. 15, No. 3

**A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) for voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.**

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## Voting Assistance Officers

### "To Do" This Month:

☒ Encourage participation in the 2005 Voting Slogan Contest. The Slogan Contest is a good way to involve people and promote voter awareness. Distribute this news-letter to the people in your organization. Remember, participants may enter as many slogans in the contest as they wish (see article on right).

☒ Redistribute a copy of this issue to each of your voting assistants so that they may submit their request to be included in the *Voting Information News and News Release* distribution. Have them complete the "Subscription Request Form" on page 4 and email their contact information to [vote@fvap.ncr.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.ncr.gov). (Enter "VIN Subscription" in the Subject line.) The form can also be faxed or mailed using the contact information provided.

(continued on page 2)

## The FVAP Wants Your Voting Slogans

### Send Your Slogans Today

The FVAP staff is excited to announce the kick-off for the 2005 Voting Slogan Contest on Monday, March 7, 2005. We are looking forward to your participation in the contest.

The Voting Slogan Contest is a biennial contest sponsored by the FVAP in its efforts to promote interest in the democratic process among citizens covered under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)* -- members of the Uniformed Services, the Merchant Marine, their families, and all U.S. citizens residing outside the United States.

It is very easy to participate. Just create a simple slogan (or slogans) that expresses in your own words the importance of voting or something that may inspire someone to vote, and submit it to the FVAP.

Upon completion of the contest (July 10, 2005), a panel of independent judges will review slogan submissions and choose the winning slogan on its originality and motivational value. This winning slogan will be featured in the FVAP's 2006-2007 media campaign which focuses on increasing voter awareness among U.S. citizens worldwide and encouraging them to participate in the democratic process. In addition, slogans will be posted on the FVAP Website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov), in the 2006-2007 *Voting Assistance Guide*, on motivational posters, audiovisual materials and in other FVAP publications and manuals.

The contest winner and runners-up will not only feel the satisfaction of knowing that their slogan is helping improve voter awareness, but they will also be given a certificate of recognition from the

Secretary of Defense for their contribution to this important endeavor.

There is no limit to the number of entries a participant may submit, but we request that all slogans be submitted separately (only one slogan per entry). The deadline for submission is July 10, 2005. All submissions must include your full name, (Service, if military), mailing address, daytime telephone number, fax number and email address (if available) so we may contact you upon winning.

### Send entries via one of the following methods:

#### Email:

[slogan@fvap.ncr.gov](mailto:slogan@fvap.ncr.gov) Text only, one slogan per email with contact information on each email. (Due to security concerns any email message with an attachment will be deleted.)

#### Fax:

(703) 696-1352 or DSN 426-1352 Visit the FVAP Website for toll-free fax numbers from 51 countries. Submit separate page for each slogan with contact information on each page. No cover sheet is necessary.

#### Mail:

Federal Voting Assistance Program  
Department of Defense  
Attn.: Voting Slogan Contest  
1155 Defense Pentagon  
Washington DC 20301-1155

If submitting by mail, please type or print (legibly) on regular 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper one slogan per page with contact information on each page.

Please join the FVAP in helping to inspire others to vote by submitting your entry today. You could be one of this year's winners! ☒

**Help Spread the News!** Copy, print and distribute the *Voting Information News* and *News Release* Subscription Request Form available in this issue.

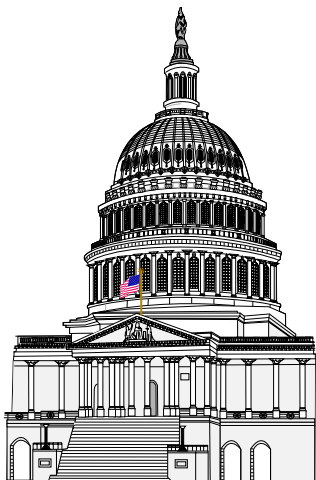
## "To Do" This Month

(continued):

The *newsletter* is available by email, regular mail, or both. *News Releases* are distributed only by email because of their perishable nature.

☑ Complete and submit the FVAP's 2004 Post-Election Survey as soon as possible, if you received one of the randomly distributed forms. If you did not, you may submit your own feedback by contacting the FVAP staff (see contact information on page 4).

☑ Visit the FVAP Website for current and back issues of this newsletter, *News Releases*, other information and resources as well as links to other sites of interest in carrying out your VAO duties. Encourage others to visit the site often.



## Implementing legislative best practices improves the process for UOCAVA citizens

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) works closely with state and local election officials and legislators to implement legislative initiatives that will make voting easier for citizens covered under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*. These are legislative best practices that have proven to make voting easier by eliminating barriers and helping ensure greater participation in the Democratic process while maintaining the integrity of the process.

Each year, the Director communicates with the Chief Election Official of each state and territory to recommend specific areas in which that state could ease the voting burden faced by UOCAVA citizens if those areas were considered and enacted by the state's legislature. Because electoral laws vary widely from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, FVAP Program Analysts, working closely with state and local election officials, identify areas that need to be improved and develop legislative initiatives for each state. The FVAP also provides sample legislative language regarding these issues to be considered by the state legislative body.

The following universal initiatives to simplify the voting process, as well as other initiatives, are being pursued this year where applicable in the individual states.

### The Need for 45-Day Ballot Transit Time

One of the most frequent problems faced by citizens that live outside the U.S. is that they do not receive their absentee ballots in time to mark the ballot and return it to their state by the election deadline. The problem often lies with the date the absentee ballots were mailed by the states. The FVAP recommends a minimum of 45 days between the date the ballot is mailed to the citizen and the due date by which the citizen must return the voted ballot to the local election official for it to be counted. Allowing for sufficient mail transit time would help ensure that more citizens' votes would be counted, especially for citizens voting from overseas. Currently, 41 states or territories provide a 45-day ballot transit time.

### Elimination of Notary Requirements

Some states still require notarization of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and

the ballot return envelope. Obtaining notarization can be difficult and expensive for citizens in some foreign countries and can be burdensome for many others. We recommend this requirement be fulfilled by allowing citizens to execute a self-administered oath on all voting materials: FPCA, ballot return envelope and state registration forms, where applicable. Six states have not eliminated the notary requirement on the FPCA and/or ballot return envelope in elections for Federal offices: American Samoa, Guam, Michigan (overseas citizens), Mississippi, Puerto Rico, and Vermont.

### Expanded Use of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

The UOCAVA requires the FWAB be accepted for Federal offices in general elections. Since the FWAB is pre-positioned, by expanding its use to include special, primary, and run-off elections, citizens would also have a back-up ballot when state ballots for these elections are not received in enough time to meet the state ballot deadline.

The FVAP is also asking the states to expand use of the FWAB by accepting it as a simultaneous registration form and voted ballot. The information requested on the FWAB is the same as the information requested from the voter on the FPCA. 11 states have expanded acceptance of the FWAB in one or both of these ways: Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

### Special State Write-In Absentee Ballots

Citizens who live or are stationed in remote areas, such as submariners, Peace Corps workers, missionaries, military members and other citizens overseas who do not have access to regular mail service are often unable to receive absentee ballots in time to vote. Unlike the FWAB, which is an emergency ballot *for Federal offices only* (see above), providing these citizens with a State Write-In Absentee Ballot 180 days before the election would afford the opportunity for these citizens to vote a *full slate* of offices and allow sufficient time for the local election official to receive the voted ballot. 27 states provide such a ballot.

(continued on next page)

## Legislative Best Practices (continued)

### Electronic Transmission of Election Materials

The authorization for and use of sending voting materials via electronic means (fax and email) has increased substantially during the past four election cycles. Electronic transmission has proven to be valuable for citizens who are unable to receive and send these materials via ordinary mail. Electronic transmission provisions range from accepting FPCAs for registration and/or ballot request, to sending a blank ballot to the citizen, to acceptance of voted ballot sent by electronic means. 49 states and territories accept one or more of these portions of the process via electronic transmission. Six states have not implemented any electronic transmission of absentee voting materials for UOCAVA citizens: Alabama, Guam, New Hampshire, New York, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

### Enfranchise Citizens Who Have Never Resided in the U.S.

Approximately 50,000 voting age children of U.S. citizens have never themselves resided in the U.S. and are not entitled to vote under current law in many states. While they are subject to all other requirements of citizenship, they are not eligible to vote. The FVAP is asking the states to allow these citizens to vote where either parent is currently eligible to vote under UOCAVA. Currently, 13 states have enacted this provision: Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

### Emergency Authority for Chief Election Official

Granting emergency authority to the chief election official (CEO) in the state or territory would allow the CEO to designate alternate methods for handling absentee ballots in times of a declared emergency, where UOCAVA citizens

might otherwise be disenfranchised. Currently, 15 states have enacted this provision: Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Virginia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

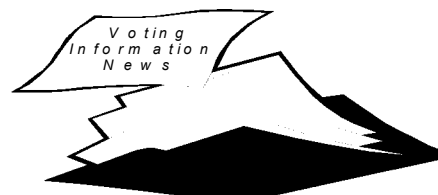
### Late Registration Alternative

Often the date a UOCAVA citizen returns to the U.S. and a state's registration requirements combine to disenfranchise the citizen. For example, if a Uniform Service member is released from active duty or an overseas citizen returns from overseas employment after the registration deadline but before the election date, they are not covered under UOCAVA and cannot vote by absentee ballot; neither can they register to vote in the election as a resident citizen. Allowing these citizens to register past the regular deadline for registration, even on the day of election, would prevent their disenfranchisement. 27 states currently permit late registration for Uniformed Services members and/or US citizens overseas.

### What You Can Do

Go to the FVAP website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) for a copy of the Legislative Initiatives sent to the state of your residency. You can then contact your state's CEO via letter or the DoD Voting Information Center to urge passage of these legislative initiatives (VIC phone numbers on last page). See the *Voting Assistance Guide* for additional state-by-state voting guidelines also found on the FVAP website. ☒

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Newsletter  
to Your  
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### Voting Action Officers

#### Department of State: Office of Overseas Citizens Services

Chief VAO: Mr. Jack Markey, **tel:** (202) 736-4937, **fax:** (202) 647-6201, **Email:** [markeyjd@state.gov](mailto:markeyjd@state.gov)  
Deputy VAO: Ms. Linda Hoover, **tel:** (202) 647-5435, **fax:** (202) 647-6201, **Email:** [hooverlr@state.gov](mailto:hooverlr@state.gov)

#### Service Voting Action Officers

**U.S. Dept. of the Army:** Mr. James Davis **tel:** (703) 325-4530 **DSN:** 221-4530; **fax:** (703) 325-4532  
**DSN fax:** 221-4532; **Email:** [davisj@hoffman.army.mil](mailto:davisj@hoffman.army.mil),  
**http:** <http://www.vote.army.mil> or **https:** <https://www.vote.army.mil>

**U.S. Dept. of the Navy:** LT Bill Danzi **tel:** 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (827-5672); **DSN:** 882-4606, **fax:** (901) 874-2054,  
**DSN fax:** 882-2054; **Email:** [MILL\\_navyvote@navy.mil](mailto:MILL_navyvote@navy.mil), **http:** <http://www.mwr.navy.mil/nvap/index.html>

**U.S. Dept. of the Air Force:** Lt. Col. Lee Shick **tel:** (210) 565-2338 (Mr. John Lowrance), **toll free:** 1-866-229-7074 (select option 4, then 6 from menu), **DSN:** 665-4369; **fax:** (210) 565-2543, **DSN fax:** 665-2543;  
**Email:** [afpc/dpsfvotingpgmdlist@randolph.af.mil](mailto:afpc/dpsfvotingpgmdlist@randolph.af.mil); **http:** <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/votefund/>

**U.S. Marine Corps:** GySgt Kenneth B. Warford **tel:** (703) 784-9511, **DSN:** 278-9511; **fax:** (703) 784-9827,  
**DSN fax:** 278-9827; **Email:** [kenneth.warford@usmc.mil](mailto:kenneth.warford@usmc.mil)  
**https:** [https://lnweb1.manpower.usmc.mil/manpower/mi/mra\\_ofct.nsf/mrp/Voting+Home](https://lnweb1.manpower.usmc.mil/manpower/mi/mra_ofct.nsf/mrp/Voting+Home)

**U.S. Coast Guard:** YNCS Lori McNaught **tel:** (202)-267-1636, **fax:** (202) 267-4823;  
**Email:** [LMcNaught@comdt.uscg.mil](mailto:LMcNaught@comdt.uscg.mil), **http:** [http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm/g-wpm-1/VotingAssistance/Voting\\_Assistance.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm/g-wpm-1/VotingAssistance/Voting_Assistance.htm)

All of the above can also be reached through the DoD Voting Information Center and the FVAP Website.

## Federal Voting Assistance Program

Department of Defense  
1155 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC  
20301-1155

PHONE:  
(703) 588-1584  
DSN 425-1584

FAX  
(703) 696-1352  
DSN 426-1352

VOTING INFORMATION  
CENTER (VIC):  
(703) 588-1343  
DSN 425-1343

TOLL FREE (VIC and FVAP  
staff member):  
1-800-438-VOTE (8683)

Visit our website for  
international toll-free phone  
and fax numbers.

EMAIL:  
[vote@fvap.ncr.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.ncr.gov)

Comments or suggestions on  
this newsletter are welcome.

Website:  
[www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)

# Vote!

## Voting Information News and News Release Subscription

Instructions: Email, fax or mail the information below to the FVAP. No cover sheet is necessary.  
Please Note: Email is proving to be one of the most effective and efficient avenues of communication with the FVAP.

Name

Email

Phone

Mailing Address

- ☐ I would like to receive the VIN and News Releases by Email at the above address.  
☐ I would like to receive the VIN by mail at the above address.  
☐ I no longer wish to receive the VIN or News Releases. Please remove my name from your list.

In order to change or remove your name from our mailing list, please provide the exact address as it appears on the mailing label of this newsletter (or attach mailing label).

Comments

Note: If you do not wish to change your delivery option at this time, no reply is necessary to continue receiving these publications.

Moving? Send an FPCA to notify your local election official. Also, send us an email so that you and your replacement can continue receiving this newsletter.

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